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p. 6
A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
EXCELLENCY
OF THE
SOUL,
AND THE
Care every Christian ought to have of it.
IN A
SERMON

Preach'd in *Spanish*,

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Translated out of *Spanish*.

L O N D O N,

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*A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul,
and the Care every Christian ought to
have of it.*

Ecclesiasticus, cap. 10. ver. 31.

*Filli, in mansuetudine serva Animam tuam, & da illi
honorem secundum meritum suum.*

*Son, in mildness keep thy Soul, and give him honour
according to his desert.*

IT is no small Misery and Confusion, that through
our own Fault, we know not our selves. We
see Men daily employ'd in finding out the
Course of the Stars, in discovering the Nature of
Plants, the Temper of humane Bodies, and the Proper-
ties of all other living Creatures; and this without the
least care of understanding the Soul, which gives them
Life. Ah, what Industry (complains the great *St. Basil*) *Bas. ho. 10. in*
in making Anatomies, in taking the Body in pieces, to *exam.*
look into its most subtle and retired parts, and leave no-
thing in it undiscern'd; while there's almost no Diligence
in enquiring after the Soul's Perfections; but so univer-
sal a neglect of this kind, that Men seem to live, as if
they had nothing more than Body; since to this alone
are directed all their Endeavours, their Labours, and their
Studies. This was the Case of the rich Man in the Gos- *Lu. 12.*
pel, who speaking to his Soul, said, *Requiesce, comede,*

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

bibe, & epulare, Take thy ease, eat, drink and be merry, thou hast Goods laid up for many Years; whose Folly was so great, as St. Basil takes notice, that he lived wholly unmindful of the Excellency of his Soul, and was so altogether delivered up to the Appetites of his Flesh, that those gross Provisions, which he had hoarded up for his Body, he design'd should serve for his Soul too. *Tam*

Basil. in Cat. D. improvidus es erga bona Anima, ut escas corporeas Anima tribuas. And, what is the greatest Misery, this blind In-

considerateness, we find every where, even amongst Christians, who, tho' they have received from the liberal hand of their Maker, a Soul so perfect; yet they apply themselves not at all to understand this Honour, but are content to live like Beasts; which was lamented long ago by the Royal Prophet; *Homo cum in honore esset, non intellexit; comparatus est jumentis insipientibus & similis factus est illis.* And what other Reason, that men thus basely degenerate, and become like Brutes; but only because they neglect the knowledge of their Souls? Of this we are inform'd from the Words of Christ, threatening the Soul, which is the Spouse. She enquir'd of him in the Canticles, Where was the place of his Repose? *Ubi cubas in meridie?* And he return'd her this Answer, *Si ignoras te, O pulcherrima inter Mulieres, egredere, & abi post vestigia gregum.* If thou know'st not thy self, thou fair'st among Women, that is (as Origen has it) if thou know'st not, O Soul; thy own great Beauty, thy own Excellency above all corporeal Beings, if thou knowest not, that I made thee for the enjoyment of my self: *Egredere & abi, Go forth and follow after the Steps of the Flock; Go forth and live like the Beasts, for thou deservest no better Company, if thou hast no esteem for thy own Perfection. Nisi cognoveris te ipsam, qua sis, jubeo te exire, & in ultimis gregum vestigiis collocari.* O formidable Sentence!

Ps. 49.

Orig. expos. 2. in ultimis gregum vestigiis collocari.
Cum. bo. 2.

Give

Give Ear, O Christian: If thou know'st not thy self, the holy Ghost says to thee; *Egredere*, Go out of my House, that is, be gone from my Protection and Government, for they are no part of my care who understand not themselves. *Egredere*, depart from my Fold; for he cannot be in my Flock, who is ignorant of himself. *Egredere*, be gone from my Friendship; for I have no Pleasure in any, but such as know what they are, and what they possess. *Egredere*, be gone even from thy self too; for thou canst have no comfort in thy own Being, if thou know'st not what thou art: *Egredere*, Go forth. But this is not all, whither must a Soul go, that is a Stranger to it self? *Abi post vestigia gregum*, Go follow after the Steps of the Flocks, Go behind the Beasts, since like them thou livest without Knowledge. And here, 'tis the remark of St. Bernard, 'tis not said, Go forth, keep Company with the Beasts; but follow after, go behind them; which is yet to be more miserable than they: for these, with this Life end all their Miseries: But that Soul, which has liv'd in a stupid ignorance of the Greatness and Excellency of its own Being, with Death is to expect yet greater Miseries, in Punishment of its Neglect. *Abi post vestigia gregum*. So many Evils, and yet more, attend this one; whence we may see how much it ought to be the concern of every one to know themselves.

Bar. ser. 35. in Cant.

Upon this Consideration it was, that St. Augustin cry'd out; *What Profits it a Man to know the whole World, if he know not himself?* And in another Place, addressing himself to Man, he says; What is it you admire, in beholding the Grandeur and Beauty of the Sun and Stars, and the vast abyss of the Ocean? What is it you admire?

Animi tui abyssum intra. Call but your Thoughts in upon your self, and ponder the Greatness and Excellency of thy Soul; and thou wilt be soon convinc'd, that none of these things are worth thy Admiration. The like Ad-

Aug. l. 4. de Trin.

vice

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

*Ber. l. 2. de
Consid.*

vice gave St. Bernard to his *Eugenius*: *A te tua Consideratio incipit, Let thy Consideration begin first with thy self.* Behold and understand what thou art; without this, all other Knowledge is but vain: *Ne frustra extendaris ad alia, te neglecto.* And for this reason, the four living Creatures, which *Ezekiel* saw, (the Symbol of Holy Men, according to St. *Gregory*) being moved by the force of the Spirit, *Went every one before his Face; Coram Facie sua ambulabat*: that is, they were present to themselves. It being proper to those who design towards Heaven, to make the Knowledge of themselves a great part of their Concern: and this not only as to the Misery of the Body, but also as to the Excellency of the Soul; according to the Advice of St. *Francis Sales*.

*Ezek. c. i.
Ed. Vulg.*

And now, since 'tis my whole Design in these Sermons, to excite all Faithful Christians, to forsake the ways of Sin, and to spend their whole Endeavours in the gaining eternal Life; I'll lay before you to day, the great Beauty and Perfection of your Soul; that having considered this thoroughly, ye may understand how base and unworthy a thing it is, to blemish and defile it with Sin; and how much reason you have to conceive high Thoughts of it, proportion'd to its Excellency. This Method I borrow from the *Canticles*; where the Holy Ghost speaking to his Beloved, the Soul, in the beginning says thus to her; *Ecce tu pulchra es, amica mea, ecce tu pulchra es. Behold thou art fair, my Love,* and then repeats it again, *Behold thou art fair.* And *Origen* gives the Reason, Because the first thing he recommends to her is, *to understand her self*; that so being sensible of her own Perfection, she may entertain such noble Thoughts of her self, as never to yield and submit to Sin: *Primo sermone invitavit Sponsus Sponsam, ut agnosceret seipsam.* Come therefore, Christians, raise your Thoughts, for a while, above all vain and terrene Objects, that so your Minds may be wholly taken

Cant. i.

*Orig. h3. 3. in
Cant.*

up in the Contemplation of that Greatness, which you possess within ye. And I hope that this Consideration will be a means, that ye conceive a horror against all Sin, and detest it; especially if the Holy Ghost assists me with his divine Grace, and enables me to do this as I ought.

Fili, in Mansuetudine serva animam tuam, & da illi honorem secundum meritum suum.

Son, in Mildness keep thy Soul, and give him Honour according to his Desert. Eccl. c. 10. v. 31.

Before I propose to you the great worth of the Soul, ^{What the Soul is.} and how unreasonable it is to debase it with Sin, I must ask one Question: Christians, do you know that you have rational Souls? 'Tis true, the external Shape and Figure you bear, speak you to be Men; yet this falls short of concluding you to be so. There were great Numbers in the Beginning of the World, which carried this Argument in their Face, and yet amongst those vast Multitudes there was only *one*, whom the Holy Ghost styles *Man*; to wit, *Enos*, whose whole Employ was in the Service of God. *Enos*, says Eusebius Cæsariensis, ^{L. 7. Prep. Ev.} *verus homo interpretatur: neminem enim putant esse verum hominem, præter eum, qui verum Deum agnoscit & piè colit.* ^{c. 3.} This it is alone, which makes a Man worthy of that Name. Wherefore, says St. Chrysostom, speaking to Sinners, if with these external Lineaments of *Men*, I see the Actions and Customs of *Beasts*, how can I reckon you amongst the Number of Men? *Qua ratione in hominum de possum numerum collocare?* ^{Hi. 23. in Gen.} Tell me therefore, Sinner, *hast thou the Soul of a man?* But I fear, thou hast not yet consider'd, whether thou hast a Soul or no: 'tis the Misery of too many Sinners, and that which a Holy Person sadly deplor'd: *Would it not be gross Ignorance.* ^{Mans. 1. c. 1.}

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

Ignorance for one, being asked, *Who he was, not to know himself, nor understand who was his Father or Mother, or what Country he was born in?* If this then would be strange Brutishness, incomparably greater is that which is found in us, when we endeavour not to know what we are, but fix our Thoughts upon these Bodies, and know not that we have Souls, but only in gross, in as much as we have heard it, and because Faith tells us so; but what Good this Soul comprises, who lives within it, or its great Value, we seldom consider; and so take but little Care to preserve its Beauty, being wholly intent in polishing the Roughness of this Case, and looking after the Walls of this Castle, which are these Bodies. Thus this devout Lady lamented the miserable Neglect of Men in not endeavouring to understand the Excellency of their Souls.

But let this Neglect, Christians, at length have an end: You have all Souls; and such as have any doubt in this Point, *St. Chrysostom* invites to the Sight of a Corpse: Behold, says he, how foul it is, how loathsome and full of Horror, and without Motion; and this, because 'tis left by that Soul, which gave it Life. Let any one move his Hand, is it not the Soul that gives the motion? You have a vegetative Life, as in Trees; you have a sensitive, as in Animals; and whence this, but from the Soul? But more than this, you see that you remember things that are past, you understand things, and frame Discourses upon them, you make Inferences, deducing one thing from another. You have a Propension to Good, an Aversion to Evil; why all this is from the Soul. In fine, the Soul is a rational, intellectual, and spiritual Substance, created by God of nothing. 'Tis a Spirit, like to the Angels, immortal and eternal; it had a Beginning, but shall never have an end: 'tis whole in the whole Body, and whole in every part. And what is most admirable, 'tis so capacious, that it can be satisfied and fill'd by none
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*Hom. 12. in
Gen.*

but God that made it. 'Tis dignified moreover with a free Will, by which it has the Liberty of embracing either Vice or Vertue, and so becomes worthy of Punishment or a Reward; which was the thing intimated by God to Cain: *Nonne si bene egeris, recipies? Si autem male, statim in foribus peccatum tuum aderit.* This is, Christian, that Queen which resides in that mean Palace of thy Body: 'tis a Pearl enclos'd in that rough Shell; 'tis the Lady and Mistrefs of that House; 'tis the Epitome of all created Perfections. O blessed for ever be the Goodness of our Creator, for the Excellency of this Work. But stay here a little, Christians, and ponder seriously, what it is that God has put into your own hands: *in manu consilii tui*; viz. the choice of Good or Evil, of Vertue or Vice, and that to work out your Salvation, or Condemnation, is left in some manner to the Determination of your own Free Will. See this a little.

In the Creation of the World, the Works of God had no sooner receiv'd their Being from his omnipotent Hand, but they also receiv'd their Approbation of being good. He made the Light, and God saw the Light, that it was good. *Vidit Deus lucem, quod esset bona.* The same is repeated five times, at the Birth of other Creatures; But when Man comes to be made, we don't read that God should say, that he was good. And what can be the Reason of this? Is Man less deserving than the other Works of the Creation? Shall they be welcom'd into the World with a Blessing, and is there none for Man, who contains the Perfections of them all? Are the Beasts, the Birds, the Fishes, more priviledg'd than Man, who is their Lord and Sovereign? No, says St. Ambrose, they are not. And the reason why they, at their coming into the World, meet with an Approbation of being good, and not man, is, Because at their first step into a Being, they are perfect, and compleat as to their Substance, with-

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A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

out any dependance of any free Operation or Choice, of which they are incapable. But *Man*, though he comes like them, *thus* compleat into the World, yet he cannot be said to be perfect; because his Perfection and last Accomplishment has a Dependance on his own free Will. For, if he *will*, by the Grace of God, he may be good; and if he *will*, through his own Malice, he may become evil. So that though at the first Instant of his Creation, he was equally the Work of God with other Creatures, yet having not exercis'd his Liberty in the choice of Good, his Approbation is suspended, till it appears to which side he apply himself, making choice either of Good or Evil. *Ideo homo non ante laudatur*, says St. Ambrose, *quia non in forensi pelle, sed in interiore homine ante probandus; sic pradicandus est*. But let me clear this Point a little farther.

*Amb. de Inst.
Virg. c. 2.*

Pier. l. 42.

Amongst the ancient Romans, 'twas a Custom, when they sent forth Souldiers to the War, to deliver to every one a white Buckler; that hence they might understand, that if at their Return they expected Rewards of the Senate, they should so behave themselves in the War, that with the description of their own Gests and Atchievements, they might fill up the White of their Shields. And for this Reason, says Rabbanns, they were call'd in Latine, *Scuta*; *Scutum dictum, quasi Sculptum; quod in ipso, Antiqui sua facta signabant*. The Roman Souldier therefore, must take care how he behaves himself in the War, being to expect no greater Honour at his Return, than he gains by his own Prowess and Valour; he carries forth with him a white Shield, to be blazon'd with his own Actions. See now Christians, the Soul of Man is call'd by the Philosopher, a smooth and plain Table, which has nothing painted or decipher'd on it. When God puts it into this World, he sends it to the War. *Militia est vita hominis super terram*. The Life of Man upon Earth is a War-

*L. 20. de Univ.
c. 12.*

*Job c. 7.
Ed. Vulg.*

Warfare : it carries with it a *Free Will*, which is, as it were, a *white Buckler*; that so, by a true Christian Valour, having won many Victories over Vice and the Devil, they may be all engraven and displayed on it; thus to gain Honour and Perfection, and at the hour of Death to receive the Commendation of him, who at its Creation sent it forth to Battel.

Look back now, Faithful, and see how long 'tis since you came into this World; for so long 'tis since you enter'd the Campagne with your *white Shields*. What is it that you have engraven on them? How have you employ'd your *free Will*? Have you made War against Vice, or Vertue? Have you follow'd the Colours of Satan, or the Standard of Jesus Christ? In what Condition are your Souls? Are they defil'd with the Abominations of Sin? O base and unworthy Choice! How can you ever expect the Welcome and Approbation of your Maker? 'Tis a thing *St. Augustin* could never cease to admire, That Man should desire every thing that is for his service, to be good about him, except his *Soul*. You desire, says the *Saint*, that the Fields should be good, in which you sow; that the Timber should be good, which you purchase; that the House should be good, in which you live; that the Horse should be good, which you buy; and that the Cloaths should be good which you wear: *solum Animam vis habere malam*; Only your *Soul*, you don't care how ill it is. *Quid te offendisti?* complains the same holy Father, *Quid de te, tu ipse meruisti?* What Injury has thy Soul done thee? What is the Reason, thou hast deserved so ill of thy self? That being industrious to provide every thing that's good, thou hast Patience to see only one thing ill about thee, and that's thy *Soul*? *Prepone vitam tuam caligæ tuæ.*

*Ser. 12. de
Ver. Dom. in
Mat.*

But that thou may'st see, that thy Soul deserves not this Neglect from thy Hands, the Holy Ghost says to you

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

to day, *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum; Give it Honour according to its desert.* And this it is that I intend you should consider now, in what Esteem you ought to have your Soul; how much it deserves, being compar'd to the *Body*; how much it deserves, for being the Image of God: what Respect is due to it, for being redeem'd by the Blood of Jesus Christ; and finally, what Care you ought to have of it, for that it is created for the Fruition of eternal Glory. *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum; Give it Honour according to its Desert.* I begin now.

The Excellency of the Soul compar'd to the Body.

Cont. 2.

One of the principal Duties of a Christian, is, to esteem all things according to their Worth and Dignity, giving to them the Place that is due to them, either as to *Love*, or *Hatred*. And this the Holy Spouse, in the *Canticles*, reckons for one of the chief *Presents* she had receiv'd from the Divine Spirit; to wit, *That he had plac'd in order her Love and Affections; Ordinavit in me Charitatem.* So that whosoever bears a Love to that which he ought to hate, or gives the *first* Place in his Affections to what should only have the *last*, does not only not do like a Christian, but even not like a rational Creature. When *Aeneas* fled from his Country, now going into Ashes, his Enemies gave him leave to take with him out of that common Ruine, the thing which was most *dear* unto him, and he immediately made choice of *his Gods*. And this his Zeal was so well liked by the *Grecians*, that upon this, 'twas permitted him to *save* something else: then he took his Father. A third time Liberty was given him, and he nam'd his Relations and Friends; preferring these before his Goods and Riches. At which Order in his Affections, they were so well satisfied, that he had forthwith leave to redeem every thing that belong'd to him, from those Flames. Now see Christian, God created the *Soul*, he form'd the *Body*, and gave a Being to all other things;
for

for the Service of *Man*; but so, that all was to be *subordinate* to the Soul. Now the business of a Christian is, to see that the *Soul* has the Precedency in all Occasions, and that he has always a greater Esteem for it, than for the *Body*, or any other transient and sublunary thing: so that whensoever any danger threatens, his first care ought to be, to *secure* his *Soul*, altho' all the rest perish. Let Life, let Honour, let Possessions, let Friends and all go, rather than for the saving of these, to hazard the loss of his Soul. For, *What can it profit a man*, according to our B. Redeemer's Words, *to gain the whole World, if he lose his Soul?* *Quid prodest homini?* Supposing therefore this Order according to the Worth of things, let us proceed, and see what Comparison there can be betwixt the *Soul* and *Body*, as to the Esteem, that is due to them. And for the setting forth of this, I'll ask this one Question:

Seeing that the Soul of Man, according to the *Psalmist*, is a *Spirit* like to the Angels, what can be the Reason, that God should confine and shut up this so noble a Creature, within the Limits of a *Body*, so infirm, and subject to so many Miseries? If she had been exempt from this clog of Earth, and liv'd alone, as the Angels do, she had been freed from the Treachery of her Companion, the *Flesh*. But no, says the great *Nazianzen*, this was not agreeable to the *Divine Providence*; *Ne sicut Angelus, homo superbiret, & periret.* God made choice, says he, of this means, so to secure her against the Temptation of her own Excellency. He created the Angels noble and glorious Spirits; but *Lucifer*, with the third part of that celestial Host, viewing their own Excellency and Beauty, soon fell into Pride, and so from Heaven. God therefore, to prevent the loss of the *Soul*, enlos'd it within a *Cafe* of Earth, thus to remove all Occasions; and that Pride, as in the Angels, might not be her Ruine. *Ne sicut Angelus, homo superbiret & periret.* Such there-

Orat. 2. post
Pasc.

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

therefore, O Christian, is the *Greatness* of thy *Soul*, that God thought fit to cast over it, a gross and heavy *Body*, that so it might be out of danger of losing it self, in the Contemplation of its own *Beauty* and *Perfection*. This is the *Poise* which, *Job* says, God made to the Winds, to wit, the *Souls* of Men. as St. *Gregory* expounds it; *Qui fecit ventis pondus*. That as the little *Bee*, grasping a *Peeble*, secures it self from the Violence of a stormy Air; so the *Soul*, being check'd and kept down by a weight of *Clay*, may remain steddy and fix'd, and frustrate all the Attempts of *Pride*, endeavouring to raise her above her self; so much care has the *Soul* cost her Creator, in providing means for her security. And according to this Doctrine now, *What is the Body?* But only the *Case* of this *Jewel*, the Slave of this Empress, the Ballast of this Ship. This is the *Order* they hold from the Appointment of God. But *how* are they rank'd by the Inordinacy of thy Malice? The Soul is the Lady and Empress; *Dominamini*, said God to *Adam*. *Subter te erit Appetitus tuus*, he said to *Cain*. Consequently she ought to be honour'd and serv'd by the Body: *Da illi honorem cui honor competit*; Give that Deference to the Soul which is due to it, as being the Chief. *Honor anima debitus est*, (writes C. A. lapide) *ut illa quasi Regina imperet Corpori, & sensibus, quasi subditis & ancillis*. The Body, with all its Senses ought to attend on, and serve the Soul, for the obtaining Life everlasting. How unreasonable therefore is it, that the *Flesh*, design'd for nothing, but to be a *Servant* and *Slave*, should be carel'd and waited on; and the *Soul*, a Queen and Monarch, should be made to drudge? What a monstrous kind of *Disorder* is this, says St. *Bernard*? Could any Christian, with Patience, see this in his House? Why then does he suffer and allow of that within himself, which in his Family, 'tis not possible he should endure? *There are three things*, says Solomon, which

c. 28.

L. 19. mor. c. 4.

Gen. 1.

Gen. 4.

10 Eccl.

L. Med. c. 3.

Prov. 30.

which disturb the Earth, and the fourth it cannot sustain.
Per tria movetur terra, & quantum non potest sustinere.

The first is, when a Servant reigns; the second, a Fool that is fill'd with Meat; the third, an odious Woman, that is taken in Marriage: these are the three things by which the Earth is mov'd. But what is that which is insufferable, and cannot be sustain'd? *Per ancillam, cum fuerit heres Dominae suae*; which the Septuagint read thus; *Serva, cum Dominam suam ejecern.* 'Tis a Servant that commands and domineers over her Lady, and turns her out of doors. And hear now St. Antony of Padua expounding what this is; 'Tis the *Flesh*, says he, when 'tis rais'd up, and takes the Command in hand, is in all things observ'd, obey'd, and waited on; while the *Soul*, being dethron'd, is neglected, scorn'd, despis'd, and made a Servant to her Slave: this it is that is intolerable.

Domina est Ratio, ancilla est sensualitas, quam etiam terra Ser. Dom. 9.
sustinere non potest, cum sibi ipsi dominationem usurpaverit Pent.
Rationis. But I'll come now to Particulars.

Come hither therefore, first, you *Covetous Men*; you, who, according to the Character of St. Ambrose, water your Fields with the Tears of the Poor; you, who concluding your selves Lords and Sovereigns of all that God has lent you for your use, shut your Ears to the Cries of the Needy, and spend nothing but on *Vice*, or your selves; you, who consume your whole Care in encreasing your Heaps; and matter not how much you trample under Foot the Law of God, and your injur'd Neighbour, so you can but advance upon them your Wealth and Possessions: Come hither, I say, and tell me, does your Soul command or serve? is the *Mistress* or *Slave*? But let the Royal Prophet answer for you; *Dormierunt somnum suum, & nihil invenerunt omnes viri divitiarum in manibus suis.* They slept their sleep, says he, and all the men of Riches found nothing in their hands. Where tho' the

The Sinner makes his Soul a Slave.

Am. Ser. 59.
de Au.

pg. 75.

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

L. de Nabuc.
c. 15.

the Words seem to import no more, than that Riches cannot exempt their *Owners* from dying; nor redeem them from Hell, if they are condemn'd to those Flames; yet St. *Ambrose* has found a Criticism in them, a direct Answer to our Question: for he takes notice, that Covetous Men are here call'd, *Viri divitiarum*, *Men of Riches*: *Bene viros divitiarum appellat, non divitias virorum*, there being a great difference between the *Riches of Men* and *Men of Riches*. We must see therefore, *which* belongs to *which*: Does the *Master* belong to his *Servant*, or the *Servant* to his *Master*? 'Tis out of doubt, the *Servant* is his *Master's*. But by what are we to know, which is the *Servant*? This too is evident; for *Servants* are labouring and toying in their several Employments, while the *Master* is taking his Ease, or divertising himself in some Recreation. Now let us look into the House of a Covetous Man, and we shall be soon satisfied as to our *Query*: there we shall behold his Bags, his Treasure, laid up, and oh! with how much Care and Sollicitude; all still and quiet. But he, how *busie*, how *uneasie*! hard at work in securing, and as earnest in drawing in more. In this, his Memory is wholly taken up, 'tis the Concern of his *Understanding*, and his Will and Affections are in a perpetual rack. And now, *which* here belongs to *which*? Which the *Servant*, which the *Master*? He's *slaving* it all day, while his Riches lye undisturb'd, and without Employ. 'Tis certain therefore, the *Riches* are not of the *Man*, but he's the *Man* of his *Riches*. *Viri divitiarum*, says St. *Ambrose*, *ut ostenderet eos, non possessores divitiarum esse, sed à suis divitiis possideri, aliena custodit ut famulus, non tanquam Dominis suis utitur*. And this is the Answer of the Psalmist, calling Misers, *Men of Riches*, to signifie to us, that while they wait on their Bags, like *Servants*, and do not use them, like *Owners*; they are not the *Masters* of their Money, but its *Slaves*. And is
not

Sup.

not this an intolerable Blindness of Men, that whenas God has given them Souls, that should *command* and *rule*, they subject them to the *Body*, and make them *Servants* to dross? O base Slavery of Covetousness! and this is the Injury every Miser does his Soul, thus does he debase it.

But let us come now to the *unclean* and *luxurious* man. This is in all Propriety a *Slave* to his *Flesh*. O poor Soul! did God create thee to serve the Body in these filthy and brutal Desires? Is it not strange, that a Soul so noble, which its *Maker* enrich'd with a *Memory* to reflect on his Benefits, with an *Understanding* to know his Greatness, and with a *Will* to love his Goodness, should now employ all his Thoughts, his Desires, his Memory, and Affections, in serving the Body in its Uncleaness, and waiting on it, in those its swinish Delights? O Baseness, to be lamented with Tears of Blood! O Soul, unworthy of that Name! O, that thou would'st be ashamed and confounded, to see thy self a Slave to such a bestial Appetite! We read in *Genesis*, that Potiphar's Wife, full of Concupiscence, cast her Eyes upon Joseph, then a Servant in her House: And 'tis very observable, how the Septuagint (follow'd by St. Chrysostom, and St. Ambrose) word it. *Injecit uxor domini oculos in Joseph. And it came to pass, that his Master's Wife cast her Eyes upon Joseph.* Now 'tis plain, that she was not only his Master's Wife, but also Joseph's Mistress, and Joseph was her Servant. And it had been a more compendious Expression, to have stil'd her his Mistress than his Master's Wife. 'Tis true, says St. Ambrose, it had been more *compendious*, but not so *proper*: for why should she be call'd a Mistress who was such a Slave to her Lust? No, rather his Master's Wife, *Uxor Domini*, is more agreeable; for she is unworthy of the Name of Mistress, who is at the Command of so brutish a Passion: Rectè *Uxor Domini*, L. 1. de Jos. (they are the Words of St. Ambrose) *non ipsa Domina* c. 5. *dicatur ----- Quomodo Domina, que dominandi non habebat affectum, que servilis libidinis incentiva præstabat?*

Soborn therefore, Christian, to be led along by a *Beast*—Be asham'd thus to debase thy *Soul*, and to make it a *Servant* to thy *Body*, which it ought to *command*.

Tell me, Christian, what would'st thou say, if thou should'st see, passing through the Streets, a Horse nobly deck'd, his Saddle embroider'd with Gold, his Bridle of Silver, his Trappings wrought with Diamonds, and the Owner on his Back scarcely cover'd with Rags? Would'st not thou think that he had lost his Judgment? And what if thou should'st behold the Sight which the Wise-man saw; *Vidi servos in equis, & Principes ambulantes super terram quasi servos*. I have seen, says he, *Servants upon Horses, and Princes walking on the Ground as Servants*. Would not this have surpris'd thee? What! Peers and Princes at the Horses Heels, waiting on their Servants! What a Madness! and yet no other Madness than thou art guilty of, when pampering thy Body, and giving it all Respect and Attendance imaginable, thou neglect'st thy Soul, leaving it basely disfigur'd, and cover'd over with the filth of Vice and Debauchery: no other Madness, Christian, than thou art guilty of, as often as thou permittest thy Soul, that noble Lady, an Empress created for the Possession of the Kingdom of Heaven, to be basely dragg'd through all the Mazes of Sin, in Obedience to the *slavish* Commands of thy unruly Flesh. O, how disorderly and preposterous is this! And yet this every Sinner does as often as he offends against his Maker; and is it not a Madness, enough to fill your Hearts with Horror and Confusion? But this is not all, says the Reverend Master *Avila*; a Sinner, when he offends, yet goes farther; he does not only make the *Slave* ride in state, and the *Prince* go on foot; but even makes the *Beast* lead the *Prince* bridled where it lists. The *Beast* governs and commands, and the *Prince* likes well to be at such a Beck. What Sense would'st thou have, Christian, of such a monstrous Spectacle? A noble Man, a Prince, once admirable both in *Learning* and *Arms*, to be

Ecc. c. 10.

*Av. in audi-
lia. c. 11.*

be at the Command of a *Bit*, while a *Brute* has the Management of the Bridle! What would'st thou say, Christian, but that such an one is only fit Company for Madmen? Why then, say it to thy self, *Thou art he*. For what is thy *Body*, but a kind of Animal, void of Reason and Understanding? and what is thy *Soul*, a Spirit, Prince of all Creatures, and capable of enjoying God? and thou permittest thy *Body*, with its bestial Appetites, to lead thy *Soul*, without either Law or Reason, wheresoever they list. What is this, Sinner, what is this luxuriose Man? Where is thy Understanding? and whither wilt thou go at last, drag'd by this wild and untam'd *Beast*? whither, but to thy eternal Ruine? And what can be the Conclusion of this disorder'd Government, where the whole Command is in the hand of a Slave? Give ear a little.

'Tis related in History, that *Semiramis* from a Slave became *Empress* in *Babylon*; and it happen'd thus. *Ninus*, Ælian. l. 3. de Var. hist. then King, blind in Love, oblig'd himself to grant her whatsoever she should ask: she desir'd, that she might have the Management of the Empire for one day; and immediately, by his Consent, the Slave was rais'd to be a Sovereign. And being thus enthron'd, she ordered several things, and was forthwith obey'd. Amongst the rest, she commanded, that *Ninus* should be seisd, and have his Head cut off: this also was immediately done. For what else could be expected where Slavery rul'd the Scepter, but Blood and Tyranny? And what is to be expected, Sinner, from this Dominion which thou hast delivered to thy *Flesh*? What is to be the end of this Obedience which thou yieldest to thy lustful Appetites? What, but an eternal Death? O! how this was lamented by the Prophet *Jeremy*? *Principes manu suspensi sunt.* Lam. c. 5. He's deploring the Miseries which the People of *Israel* suffer'd in *Babylon*, and he says, that the *Chaldeans* had hang'd up their Princes, and gave no Respect to the Ancients; *Facies senum non erubuerunt.* All was full of Sadness and Hor-

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

ror. And how came this, O *Israelites*? What was it that drew upon you these Afflictions? The Prophet had declar'd it just before: *Agypto dedimus manum, & Assyriis ut saturaremur pane.* We, say the miserable Captives, we deliver'd our selves to the *Egyptians* and the *Assyrians*, and we became Slaves to our Slaves. *Servi dominati sunt nostri.* And this was the Origin of all their Misfortunes. And you, O Christian Souls, who are over-rul'd by your Slaves, by your carnal Appetites, what Conclusion can you expect? Death and eternal Torments wait for you. Oh, when will you resolve to regain the Dominion over your Body? Will you put off, and neglect, till all Recovery is become impossible?

Stay a while, and give ear to the Cries of those miserable Souls, who are in Hell Flames, there condemn'd to suffer for all Eternity; hear what they say; *Ergo erravimus à via veritatis, & justitia lumen non luxit nobis.* We therefore have erred, is their common Voice. O poor Wretches! And now are you become sensible of it, when you are past Remedy? *David* was more circumspect, who made this Reflection in time: *Erravi sicut ovis.* I have erred, says *David*; and, *We have erred*, is the Cry of the Damned. *David* pronounc'd it in season, it being in him the Voice of Repentance; but they have neglected their time, and in them 'tis only the effect of Despair. *Ergo erravimus; We have therefore erred*, say they. A consequence indeed, but very ill timed. The Antecedent in this Life, spent in Sensuality and Lust, and the Consequence in Hell? O! how this will conclude little before the Mercy-seat! Do you see, Christians, how they lament? and how now, too late, they understand their Error? Reflect now a little, and consider what it was, and wherein their Error did consist? But they declare it themselves: *Et justitia lumen non luxit nobis.* We follow'd not the Directions of Justice. Justice is that which gives to every one their own. And here they begin to understand what was their Error. That where-

Wil. 5c.

Pl. 118.

whereas they were bound to give to their Souls the Honour and Respect of a Lady and Empress, and treat their Bodies like Servants; they, on the contrary, gave the Honour to the Body which did not belong to it, and abus'd their Souls, like Slaves. And this it is which they now fruitlessly lament, in the middle of their Torments: *Justitia lumen non luxit nobis*; and the same will be their Complaint, without hopes of Remedy, for a long Eternity. *Merito conqueruntur*, says a Learned Author, *in inferno damnati, se justitia lumine caruisse, quia verè mali nesciunt unicuique rei debitam aestimationem tribuere; plaris enim corpus, quam animam faciunt, &c.* *Labat.*

And, you Christians, who hear this, till how long will you expect, before you understand your Error; till when there shall be no longer a Possibility of Remedy? *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum.* Ah! rather let your Souls *now* have the Honour which is due to them; let them have the Precedency of your Body, in all Respects. 'Tis base, and unbeseeming a Christian, to make his Body the whole Business of his Concern, while his Soul shall lye neglected, and be no part of his Care. Who is there of you so unreasonable, that if he should see his House on Fire, his Servants in danger, his Wife expos'd to the Flames, would be first solicitous in saving his Servants? And yet, you Sinners, who have your Souls ready to be seiz'd on by Hell-fire, and your Flesh burning with Concupiscence; to which do you run first with Assistance? Do you seek for Plenty of Tears to secure your Soul from the Flames of Hell; or the Water of vain Delights and unlawful Pleasures, to extinguish, or rather satisfy the fire of your own Lust? O Misery, to thrust your Souls more into the Flames, that your Bodies may be at ease! *Da illi honorem.* Ah Christians, look rather to secure your *Souls*, tho' your *Bodies* perish. The Body is attended by many Necessities, the Soul is in want of the Divine Grace: that the Body may be supplied, how little

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

little is it to run over the whole World, and to trample all Difficulties under foot; and shall no Pains be taken, that the Soul may have her Support? *Da illi honorem.* Is it the Soul of a Beast that you have within you, that it seems so unworthy of your Care? Who ever saw a Soldier receive the Dart in his Breast that he might preserve his Shield untouch'd? The Serpent exposes his Body to the Blow, to secure his Head, wherein his Soul resides: and is it befitting a Christian, to let his Soul lye open to all the Assaults of the Devil, that his Body may be kept harmless? No, the Body was intended to receive the Blows, and the Soul for Honour: *Da illi honorem.* And if thou canst not comply so far, as to let thy Soul be the chief part of thy care, at least, let it have an equal share with thy Body. Take but notice, says St. *Chrysostom*, with how much Sollicitude thy Body is waited on, if indispos'd; and how careful thou art, to free thy Eye from any thing that molests it: *Animam autem tuam tantâ malorum congerie pressam negligis.* But thy Soul, lying under a Complication of Distempers, how little Concern for her Delivery? Why is she thus neglected? If thy House be in danger of falling, thou do'st not let every Trifle divert thee from preventing the Ruine; but that which is most considerable, is certain of having thy first Assistance. Why, have the same care then for thy Soul, as for thy House; at least, as thou hast for every Beast that goes along the High-way: *Cadit asinus*, is the Complaint of St. *Bernard*, & invenit, qui se sublevet; cadit anima, & non est qui manum apponat. The Beast falls in the way, says the Saint, and there never want those who will help it up: but the Soul falls into Sin, and she's left in the mire. How unchristian is this! Have the same care for it as thou hast for the Garment thou wearest; as for the Shoes under thy Feet, which thou hast not Patience to see out of order. Let not thy Soul be in the Extremity of Wants, disfigur'd, nay, almost devour'd by Sin, and yet want Assistance: *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum.* The

*Ho. 14. in
Mat.*

*Ser. 14. in
Eam.*

The Excellency of the Soul is yet made clearer to us from another Consideration; in as much as it is the *Work* of God, a work fram'd after his own *Image*. Upon which account, a much greater Respect is yet due to it. *Da illi honorem*. For the laying open this, make a short Reflection, Christians, how great an Esteem Men generally have for any Picture or Statue, of the hand of any famous and excellent Artist. We have a Relation in *Pliny*, that King *Demetrius* having laid Siege to *Rhodes*, and there being no prospect of his gaining the City, but by opening a Breach in that part of the Wall where stood a Picture, the Workmanship of the great *Protogenes*; he, not to injure the Piece, immediately commanded the Siege to be rais'd; chusing rather to omit the making himself Master of so considerable a Post, than to prejudice the work of that great Master. *Parentemque Pictura fugit occasio victoriae*. And was not this Piece of *Protogenes* highly valued by *Demetrius*? And how much higher Value yet ought we to put upon our Souls for being the Work of God? it being certain, that whensoever our Vicious Appetites are drawing forth in opposition to the Divine Law, and our wicked Desires are making an Attack on the City of God, 'tis impossible we should proceed in these Designs without defacing and even ruining our Souls, made by the hand of that Divine Artist. *Manus tue fecerunt me. Thy hands have made me*. Let us have therefore a respect for our Souls, due to the Greatness of the Omnipotent hand that made us. But if we consider a little farther, we shall discover our Souls to be not only the *Work* of God, but also his *Image*: a yet more forcing Argument for our Respect. There was in *Athens* a Statue of *Minerva*, made by *Phidias*, which was much celebrated among the Ancients: and the reason was, as *Aristotle* relates it, because in the Shield of the Goddess, the Author had so ingeniously wrought his own Image, that 'twas impossible to efface this, without quite

The Excellency of the Soul, in as much as 'tis the Image of God.

L. 35. c. 11.

PG. 118.

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

quite ruining the *whole*. How much more have we to say for our selves, Christians, having Souls whose whole Substance is the very Image of their Creator? *Ad imaginem & similitudinem nostram?* How much greater is our Privilege, bearing stamp'd in our Humane Being, the Pourtraiture of our God: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui Domine?* But 'twill not be amiss now, to hear from the Mouths of the Holy Fathers, in what manner our Soul is made after God's own Image.

Chr. bo. 10.
in. Gent.

Aug. li. 8.
in 1. Joan.

Am. l. dign.
cor. hum.

Dam. l. 2. Fid.
O. Th. 1. p. q.
93. ar. 2.

Ser. 1. de
Nat. Do.

St. *John Chrysostom* says, it consists in this; that as God is far above all Creatures whatsoever, so the Soul of Man is superiour to all corporeal Beings, in Dignity, Command, and Power. St. *Augustin* says, the *Likeness* consists chiefly in that the Soul is endow'd with an *Understanding*; and that as God *knows* and *loves* himself, so also does the Soul. St. *Ambrose*, because as God is *whole* in the *whole* Universe, and *whole* in every part, so also is the Soul in respect of its Body: and as God is *one* in Essence, and *three* in Persons; so is the Soul *one* in its *Essence*, and *three* in its *Powers*, the Will, Memory, and Understanding. S. *John Damascen*, that as God is *free*, so likewise the Soul. St. *Thomas* says, 'tis the Image of God, because it has a larger Portion of the Divine Perfections than any other Creature. God has a *Being*, he has *Life* and *Understanding*; the Heavens and Elements partake of his *Being*; the Plants and Beasts, of *Life*; and Angels of his *Understanding*. But the Soul has a share of all together, it is ennobled with a *Being*, with *Life* and *Understanding*, all Excellencies of God himself. O Soul, did'st thou but know thy own Perfection, what esteem would'st set up on thy self! *Agnosce*, O *Christiane*, says St. *Leo*, *dignitatem tuam, & divine consors factus natura, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione redire*. *Understand*, says he, and acknowledge thy own Excellency; and since God has rais'd thee to be Partaker of his own Being; be not so base, as by Sin to degrade thy self from this so great an Honour.

nour. For this only reason, Christian, has God priviledg'd thy Soul, above all other Creatures; that thy Life may be answerable to thy Origin. *Nobilem*, says Eucherius, *vult esse vitam tuam, qui tibi comisit imaginem suam.* He Ho. 2. de symf.
 that has imprinted his own Likeness in thy very Being, intends that thou should'st be also like him in thy way of living. God's Life consists in his knowing and loving himself; and it ought to be the Life of thy Soul, to know and love God. *Dat unde ipsi quoque*, are the Words of St. Leo, *quod operatur, operemur.* This is thy Being, this thy Ser. 1. de Ies.
10. man.
 Obligation. But thou, Sinner, how hast thou comply'd with this thy Duty? O the Wickedness of Sin! How often hast thou condemn'd and trodden upon this Dignity of thy Soul? How often hast thou, by thy Villanies, defil'd, nay quite defac'd this Image of thy God? *Denigrata est facies, eorum super carbones.* Thou hast made thy Soul more black than the very Coals; and at that time, when thou did'st commit thy Iniquities, thou didst wipe off from thy Soul, that *Likeness* of the Blessed Trinity, which till then it wore, by the Grace of thy Maker. *Exhonorat animam*, said Rabbanus, *qui peccatis illam polluit.* L. 3. in Eccl.
 He treats his Soul unworthily who pollutes it with Sin. But c. 3.
 hear now, how it is that Sin strikes off from the Soul the Image of God.

The Soul of Man is, as it were, a Seal, bearing on it the Image of the Blessed Trinity: *Tu signaculum similitudinis.* And 'tis, as *Rupertus* describes it, as if the King, with his Signet, should imprint on Wax, his Arms and Picture: *Tanquam cera sigilli Testatoris imagine signata.* For L. 2. in Gen.
 just so has God stamp'd on the Soul of Man, as in Wax, c. 2.
 the *likeness* of his own Divine Being. But when a Sinner, unmindful of his Duty, offends against his Creator, O what a sudden change, how this *likeness* soon disappears! *David*, very sensible of this, exactly lays before us the manner of it: *Sicut fluit cera à facie ignis, sic preant peccatores* Eccl. 28.
à facie Dei. Let any one take into his hand a piece of Wax,

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that

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

that has a Figure stamp'd on it, of a Lamb, a Dove, &c. let him hold it to the Fire; the Wax soon dissolves, and the Image it bore is utterly lost: *Sicut fuit cera à facie ignis*. In like manner does Sin quite destroy the *Likeness* of God, imprinted on the Soul. *Sic pereant peccatores à facie Dei*. The Soul, when 'tis in Grace, is nobly beautified with God's own *Image*; but approaching to the Fire of Concupiscence, of Anger, of Pride, the Soul begins, in a manner to melt away, to be dissolv'd; and the *Image* that it bore of its *Maker* is quite effac'd. *A facie ignis*, says *Novarinus*, *à sole ab aëre concupiscentiæ, sic perit in eis* & *esluit imago dei, ut fuit cera à facie ignis*. Consider then, Sinner, what thou do'st, when thou puttest thy self in occasion of offending God, when thou follow'st ill Company, givest ear to idle Discourse; this is to hold the *Wax* out to the Fire; 'tis to wipe off the *Likeness* of God from thy Soul, and exchange it for that of the Devil. O, if thou did'st but behold, how foul and ugly thou art within, at the very Instant thou consentest to any wicked Thought! if thou did'st but see how horrid and deform'd thy Soul is rendred by every mortal Sin! It may be call'd indeed the *Image* of its Creator, but so abus'd and disfigur'd, that there's no *Likeness* left. Stay therefore on this Consideration a little, and tell me for the present, what would'st thou say, if thou should see, in the middle of the Street, some wicked Jew, or any other profane Miscreant, treading under his feet the *Image* of our Blessed Redeemer; and full of Contempt and Spite defacing it with a thousand irreligious Blows? What would'st thou say, Christian, in this case? Would not thy Zeal put thee on to rescue it from such an unchristian Abuse, and the Respect thou owe'st to him whom it represents, oblige thee to place it some where with Decency out of the reach of such a hellish Malice? Why look then, Sinner, see where thy Soul is; it lies under the feet of the Devils: Do'st thou know it? *Cujus est Imago hæc? Whose is this Image?* Is it not the *Image* of thy God,

In Elest.

Mat. 22.

God, and of thy Maker and Redeemer? See how 'tis abus'd, how disfigur'd; how 'tis without all Beauty and Grace. *Egressus est à filia Sion omnis decor ejus.* Why do'st not thou, without delay, redeem it from these Injuries? How can'st thou have Patience to see it trampled on by these infernal Furies? Ah! force it away, snatch it up, and by a sincere and hearty Repentance, deliver it into the hands of thy God, that he may cleanse it and restore it to its former Beauty. *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum.*

But as yet we have not seen the full worth of the Soul: it deserves a yet higher esteem from us, if we consider at how great a rate it was held by Jesus Christ, and how much he gave for it. *Quam pretiosus sis,* said *Encherius*, *si Factorem forte non credis, interroga Redemptorem.* If thou know'st not, O Soul, to set a value upon thy self, for being the Image of thy Creator, turn to thy Redeemer, and learn of him, how much thou art worth. O how much! *St. Hilary*, after a thorough Consideration of this Point, says, that the Son of God gave so much for the Soul, that it seems in some manner to be worth even God himself: *Tam copioso munere ipsa Redemptio agitur, ut homo Deum valere videatur.* *St. Augustine* said it more expressly, *Sanguinem fudit Unicus Filius Dei pro nobis. O Anima, erige te, tanti vales.* The only Son of God shed his Blood for us: O Soul, look up, for so much art thou worth. Yes, Christian Soul, have an esteem for thy self; the Son of God gave his Blood for thee. Thou art that Lost Sheep for whose Recovery the Heavenly Pastor undertook so laborious and chargeable a Journey. Thou art that precious *Drachm* that was lost, for the regaining of which, that inaccessible Light, the second Person in the Blessed Trinity, was brought forth in our Humanity; God being made Man, for the Redemption of Man. Thou art that precious Jewel, for the purchasing of which, the Divine Lapidary, who knew well its Value, gave all that he had: he gave his Blood, his Life, his Honour, he gave all, he gave his whole self, that he might have thee; not thinking

The Excellency of the Soul redeem'd with the Blood of Jesus.

Ho. 2. de Symb.

Ap. Euf. hum. 2.

in Pl. 102.

any price too high in such a Purchase. See then, Christian, how much thou ought'st to prize thy Soul, since Jesus Christ valued it at so high a rate, that he did not only lay down his Life for thee, but if 'twere necessary, would return, and do it a second time. O blessed be such Love, blessed be such Goodness! But, thou, Sinner, tell me after all this, to whom does thy Soul belong, to whom hast thou deliver'd it? Imagine with thy self, that here comes in at present Jesus Christ on one side, and the Devil on the other, both with a Design to buy this Jewel, thy Soul. Christ offers thee for it, all that thou hast already heard. The Devil gives thee a little *Smoak* which he calls *Honour*; a little *Dross*, which he calls *Interest*; a short *Imagination* which he calls *Gust* or *Pleasure*. Now what hast thou accepted? To which hast thou given thy Soul? *In iniquitatibus vestris venditi estis*. At the very Instant that thou consented'st to sin, you made a *sale* of your Soul; but to whom? To Jesus Christ, who gives so high for it, or to the Devil, who gives you nothing? O vile Contract of a Sinner! thou hast sold it to the Devil. St. *Augustin* declares it to thee in plain terms; *Unusquisq; peccando animam suam diabolo vendit, accepto tanquam precio, dulcedine temporalis voluptatis*. Whosoever sins, says he, sells his Soul to the Devil, at the price of some vain and fading *Delight*. But stay, Sinner, what do'st thou do? Do'st thou make a delivery of thy Soul to the Devil, being a Jewel which cost the Son of God no less a price than his own Blood? Give ear a little to *David*, at that time when the *Philistins* had laid Siege to *Bethlehem*; *O quis mihi daret potum aquæ de cisterna, quæ est in Bethlehem*. O (says he) that some Man would give me drink of the Water of the Cistern that is in *Bethlehem*. Which when some of his Captains had heard, three of them broke through the Camp of the Enemies, and having drawn Water out of the Cistern of *Bethlehem*, they brought it to *David*. But he, *noluit bibere, he would not drink; but offered it to our Lord.*

Ep. ad Rom.
Prop. 42.

2 Kin. 23.

Lord. Libavit eam Domino. And he gives the reason; *Num sanguinem hominum istorum, & animarum periculum bibam!* Shall I drink (says he) the Blood of these Men, and the peril of their lives? Water that cost so dear is not proper to be drunk, but to be made a Sacrifice: so that he seems to have reason'd thus with himself; This Water I may now either give to my self, in satisfaction of my Appetite; or else to God, to whom it is due. But seeing, in the procuring, it cost these Men the hazard of their Lives, I'll never let it be spent on a *Gust* of my own, but I'll offer it up to my God: *Libavit eam Domino.*

Ah Christians, Christians! If *David* put so high a Value on a little Water, for respect of the Danger these men underwent; how ought you to esteem your Souls, which have been purchas'd not only with Dangers, and an uninterrupted toil of 33 Years, but even with the Life and Blood of Jesus Christ? *Quanti queso,* says a Learned Author, *facienda est salus nostra, non quidem hausta periculo sanguinis, & vite puri hominis, sed sanguine ipso, & vita ipsa hominis dei nostri?* Thou hast cost (O Soul) not only the danger of Life, but even Life it self; and that not of Man, but of thy Redeemer, God and Man. And this Soul which has been so dearly purchas'd, thou basely deliverest into the hands of thy greatest Enemy. And this, as the Prophet has it; *Propter pugillum hordei, & fragmen panis;* for a handful of Barley and a morsel of Bread; for any of these little and inconsiderable *Nothings* of this World: and how many times even for less? how many times without Gain, without Gust, without Honour? how many times hast thou laid it down *before hand*; sinning to day, on some design for the next Year? and how many times without all Hopes of any advantage, but rather with Discontents, Poverty, and publick Disgrace? How often hast thou gone forth, and like the Apostate Disciple, invited the Devils to take thy Soul at their own rate? *Quid vultis mihi dare, & ego eum vobis tradam?* What delight will

Labat.

Ex. 13.

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

will you give in Exchange of my Soul? O unreasonable Vileness of Sinners! O monstrous Ingratitude! What a Madness is this, exclaims St. Bernard, that a Christian should so disesteem his Soul, and make less Account of it than the Devil does? Satan offer'd to Christ, for *his*, all the Kingdoms in the World, when as yet he did not know him to be the Son of God; and the wicked Christian delivers his without any Agreement, but standing wholly to the Devil's Courtesie? *Quis furor tam viles habere animas, quas etiam Dæmon pretiosas habet!* But tell me, Sinner, what would'st thou take to be a Slave under the inhumane *Turks*, where thou art to expect nothing but a most cruel Usage, Hunger, Blows, and Tyranny, without Ease, Rest, or Sleep; or any satisfaction whatsoever? Is there any Price that can hire thee? I believe not. And yet of thy own Accord, thou makest thy self one of the Devil's Slaves; thou puttest thy self under him, where thy Captivity shall be far more intollerable, and without all hopes of Redemption; since thou unworthily tramplest under foot the Blood of thy Redeemer. *Quare tibi tam vilis es, qui tam pretiosus es Deo?* Why, says St. Chrysologus, art thou so base to thy self, who art so highly esteem'd by thy God? Think of this with Shame and Confusion; esteem thy Soul as God esteems it, at least esteem it more than the Devil himself does: *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum.*

The Excellency of the Soul, created for Glory.

L. 3. in Eccl.
c. 3.

The Respect due to the Soul is rais'd yet one degree higher, inasmuch as the design of its first Creation was for the Enjoyment of an eternal Felicity, being made capable of God himself, and the Possession of the clear and beatifical Vision of its Maker in Glory. *Secundum meritum suum, spe futurae mercedis*, says Rabbanus, Give it its due, says he, on hope of a future Reward. God did not create thy Soul, Christian, for the empty Vanities of this World: no, raise thy Thoughts higher. Harken to Holy Job; *Homo ad laborem nascitur, & avis ad volatum. Mar*

is born to Labour, and the Bird to Flight; which, according to the *Moral Gloss*, signifies, that the *Body* was intended for Labour and Toil, but that the *Soul* was created for to take its *Flight* to Heaven, and raise it self to God. This Honour, this Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, was purchas'd for us by Jesus Christ; who by his own most precious Blood did wipe out the *Hand writing* which the Devil held against us for our Exclusion from Glory: *Delens quod adversus nos erat chyrographum decreti*. O Soul! and what an Honour is this, that thou wert not made for Eating, Cloathing, and the little businesses of the Earth! Thou hast a *Right* to an eternal Crown; O, how would'st thou esteem thy self, if thou did'st but know what thou art!

Gl. mor. in
Job. c. 5.

Colos. 2.

Ochozias, King of *Juda*, being dead, *Athalia* his Mother, full of Cruelty, and the Ambition of Ruling, immediately slew all the King's Sons, excepting only *Joas*, who was snatch'd from the Slaughter by *Josaba* his Aunt, who, keeping him in Disguise six Years, brought him up in the Temple, till at length he was crowned King. *Eratq; cum ea sex annis clam in domo domini*. Now those that were not privy to the Secret, and knew him not to have a Right to the Kingdom, we may easily imagine, gave him no other Respects, than to other Youths, to whom his Education made him a Companion: while those few that were conscious of the whole Intrigue, honour'd him as a Prince, and serv'd him as their Sovereign; knowing that in a short time he would come to be vested with his Imperial Robes, and sway the Scepter of *Judah*, tho' then he was but in a mean rank, and reputed as ordinary: *Ab iis* (says the *Eusebius* of our Age) *qui filium Regis noverant, magno habebatur honore, non quia regis ornabatur insignibus, sed quia ornandus erat*. O Christian Souls! says the holy Evangelist *St. John*; now, while you are in this Life, your great Dignity is known but by few; you are as yet hid and in disguise, and, like young *Joas*, without your princely Robes, without the Ensigns of Bliss. *Nondum apparuit, quid erimus*; but there will

4 Kin. 11.

Euf. Hier. h. 2.
sect. 5.

1 Jo. 3.

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Soul.

will come a time, when you shall be call'd to your Kingdom, and crown'd with Glory. *Cum autem apparuerit similes ei erimus*, &c. O admirable Greatness! and is there any that knows how to respect you according to desert! but have you, Christian, made any Reflection upon this Excellency of your Soul? I wish the gross and foggy Delights of this transitory Life, have not rais'd a Mist before your eyes, and quite clouded your Understanding. 'Tis very remarkable what *Lyra* relates of the famous *Nebuchodonozor*, King of *Babylon*. He says, that he was no sooner born, but expos'd in the Woods, where he was brought up at the care of a wild Goat; till at length a poor Countryman passing by, took him, and brought him up amongst his Children, without any distinction of Fare or Apparel. Now 'tis beyond all doubt, says a learned Modern, that if any one had come and assured him, that he was not the Son of his reputed Country-Father, but of a great Monarch; that he was not born for the Harrow or Plow, but to have the Command over Empires; no doubt, but he would immediately have rais'd his Thoughts above those rustick Concerns, and follow'd such Designs as the nobleness of his Descent, and the hopes of a Crown, should have suggested to him. Now give ear, Christians, to what the Royal Prophet speaks to you; *Filii hominum* (or as another Reading has it) *Filii viri inclyti; ut quid diligitis vanitatem?* Christian Souls, Children of God, shut up within this poor Cottage of Clay, and that have no other Knowledge than what is deriv'd to you by the Senses; take notice, that you were created for an Empire. Let it not be always said to you, that you are *Dust* and *Ashes*, this is only meant of the *Body*. But that you are of the Lineage of God; *Ipsius & genus sumus*. Let it be said to you, that you were born for an unchangeable Crown; that these your mean Garments shall be chang'd into Imperial Robes, and your Sweats and Toil into Ornaments of an everlasting Bliss. Lift up your Eyes to Heaven: behold

Lyra. in Dan. c. 1.

Causin.

Act. 17.

hold the Sun, the Moon, the Stars; Why, you were created to be exalted above all these, to tread them under your feet. And if so; *Ut quid diligitis vanitatem?* What, do you make this World your whole Concern, and busie your selves in its short-liv'd Vanities?

If we should behold a young Prince, chusing Boys in the Street for his Companions, and inclin'd to no other Education than what was to be had from their useles and unmanly sports; would it be prudent to mind him, that he was made of the same Earth with the rest; or rather, with a respectful Check, to tell him, that those common Toys were beneath his Quality, and that he ought to remember, he was born to a Crown? Souls of Christians, you are *Heirs to a Kingdom; Heredes quidem Dei*: Lay aside these vain concerns, so much inferior to your Greatness: *Ut quid diligitis vanitatem?* Why do you so disesteem and neglect that right to Glory which Jesus Christ has purchas'd for you? The Title you have to any Temporal Estate, to any Lordship, or Principality, you maintain with all diligence and industry imaginable. And if any seek to injure you, or deprive you of it, you are not wont to sit still and behold your self wrong'd with Patience and Silence. God Almighty, by his Prophet, puts to you this Question: *Si fures introissent ad te, si latrones per noctem; quomodo conticuisses.* If Thieves had gone into thee, if Robbers by night, how had'st thou held thy Peace? 'Tis certain you would have cry'd out for Assistance. Why then, since you see your selves spoil'd by Sin, of all your Titles and Right to Glory; why don't you cry out in an humble and hearty Confession? Why don't you, in penitent sighs, call upon him who alone is able to relieve you? And why, instead of this, do you disable your selves from laying any claim to Heaven, and rashly invite in those whose business 'tis to rob your Souls of that Inheritance. Come, there's enough, enough of this Folly; have that Respect for your Souls which they deserve, and maintain their Title to Bliss: *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum, spe futura mercedis.*

Finally, for the conclusion of this Discourse, 'twill contribute much, to the imprinting this Doctrine in your Heart, if you reflect on the words of my Text, how that the Holy Ghost commanding you to honour your Soul, says, *Da illi*, in the singular; to mind us, that we have but one. 'Tis one, says the Spouse in the Canticles, *Una est columba mea.* 'Tis only one, says David; *De manu Domini unicam meam.* Christians, we have but one Soul, only one. God has given us (as discourses St. Chrysostom) two Eyes, two Ears, two Hands, and two Feet, that if one be injur'd or lost, we may have the comfort and assistance of the other: *Animam vero dedit unam nobis; si hanc perdiderimus, quam vivamus?* But he has given us but one Soul, and if this be lost have we any other for a Supply? No, certainly. Why then should

we be so inconsiderate, as to hazard *this* every moment, and to put it to the venture of a remediless Eternity of Miseries: In Noblemen's Houses 'tis customary at night, to have two or three Lights in their Presence, that so if by any Accident one should fail, they may not remain in Darkness, but be supply'd by the other. But, Christians have but *one Light, one Soul* within them, and if this miscarry, nothing is to be expected, but an eternal Darkness, subject to the just Indignation of their God. You have read, how full of Wrath *David* was when the Parable of the *little Ewe* was put to him by *Nathan* the Prophet. He demanded Justice at the King's hands, for that a Rich man in the City, who abounded in Sheep and Oxen, took away from a certain Poor man a *little Ewe*, whose Stock went not beyond this *one*, and of this made a Feast for the entertainment of a Stranger that came to his House; *Nihil habebat omnino præter ovem unam parvulam*. At which *David*, being fill'd with Indignation, protested before the Lord, *Vivit Dominus*, that the Man that had done the thing should pay it fourfold. At which the Prophet replying to the King, said, *Thou art the Man*, against whom thou art so justly angry. And I may turn to thee, Sinner, and say, *Thou art the Man*. For is not thy *Soul*, that little Sheep, which Christ bought at the price of his own Blood; is it not that which God created, redeem'd, and has design'd for his Eternal Glory? And this thou offerest to the Devil thy *Guest*; thou makest of it a Banquet, to entertain *Lucifer*, being only *one*, and which has cost thy God so dear. And dost not thou in this provoke the omnipotent hand of God against thee? Thou hast one only *Jewel*, and this thou mortgagest every day more and more, by thy Offences: it will come one day to remain wholly in the power of thy Enemy, to whom thou hast thus engag'd it. Thou hast only one piece of Land, and this thou neglectest to Till or Plant with good Works; wilt not thou by this means come to perish eternally with Hunger? Thou hast one only House, and seeing this all in flames, consuming with the Fire of Sin, thou dost not at all bring Relief, nor seek plenty of *Tears* to extinguish it: and is not this the way to cast thy Soul into Hell, as a *Fewel* for those never-ending Planes? Ah, rather seek to prevent these Mischiefs, and give the Honour to the Soul which is due to it. *Da illi honorem secundum meritum suum*.

Come therefore, Christian; *Miserere Animæ tuæ*, take Compassion on thy poor Soul. Enter a while, retire within thy self, says *St. Augustin*, and thou wilt find thy *Soul*, necessitous and miserable, asking thee an Alms, begging for Relief. *Redi ad conscientiam tuam, & ibi invenies, egentem, & mendicantem animam tuam*. Look in, and thou wilt behold the *Missess* serving, and the *Slave* commanding. Look in, and thou wilt see the *Image* of God, under the feet of the Devil. Look

Ser. 31. *
verb. Dom.
Mat. 46.

in, and thou wilt see that which Jesus Christ bought at the Price of his own Blood, sold and made over to Satan for a little Air, for nothing. Look in, Sinner, and thou wilt find that which was created for an everlasting Kingdom, to be now obnoxious to an eternal Ignominy. Look in, and thou wilt behold thy poor Soul, without God, without Life: *Sentiva relitta*, waiting every Instant to be thrown into Hell. *Miserere anime tue*, Take pity on thy Soul. Behold her made a publick Mansion of Devils, where they enter and dwell without any opposition, by wicked Thoughts, profane Words, and worse Works. *Fac ergo elemosynam anime tue*. Bring therefore some Relief, saith St. *Augustin*, to thy Soul, in this her extremity of wants; give ear to her Petitions, and be not deaf to her sad Complaints in these her Miseries. And for the present be attentive to this Relation:

Ubi sup.

We read of a certain wretched Man, who living unmindful of God and his Soul, gave himself up wholly to Licentiousness and Debauchery. On an occasion, he was making merry with his Companions, eating and drinking without measure; and amongst other things, they began a Discourse of, *What was to be after this Life?* Many things had been said, when behold a Stranger comes in, desiring to know the matter of their Dispute: to whom this miserable man; Here, says he, we are entertain'd with a pretty Debate, of what is to become of our Souls when they have left the Body; but for my part, if I could find a Chapman, I would sell my Soul, and feast my Friends with the price of it. At which, the Stranger answer'd, that he would buy it: and forthwith the Bargain being agreed on, paid the Money; with which the other entertain'd the whole Company. But night being come, he that had made the Purchase said, 'Tis now time we should break up, and therefore, I declare to you all, that I am the Devil: this Wretch hath made a delivery to me of his Soul, and I have Command of the Highest, to carry him away, both Soul and Body; and immediately taking him into the Air, he disappear'd, and hurried him into the bottomless Pit of Hell, where he is now consuming in those never-ending Flames, and shall be, as long as God shall be God, without hopes of Ease or Relief.

Tho. de Cantipr. l. 2. apud c. 56.

See now, Sinner, what is the Conclusion of those who neglect their Soul; the same miserable Fate attends thee, if thou dost not amend: thou hast yet time to prevent all, by a serious and hearty Repentance: at that time when thou didst sin against thy God, thou mad'st over thy Soul to the Devil; but the Contract may be yet broken off, and made null, by a true Sorrow and an hearty Contrition. Come then, make haste to revoke thy Word, and undo so unjust a Bargain. Alledge that there was fraud in the Sale, that the Purchaser has abus'd the Jewel, and cheated the Owner. Let the

abus-

abundance of thy Tears cancel the Writhings, and the Intenseness of thy Repentance make void all the Obligations; by which thou deliveredst thy self to the Power of *Satan*. Christian, there's enough of Blindness. You have only *one* God, you have *one* Soul alone; and but *once* can you expect to dye; Why is it that you continue in Sin? Your Soul in Possession of the Devil! Your Soul in danger to be damn'd eternally! Oh, why don't you prostrate your selves at the feet of your merciful Redeemer, of your Crucified Jesus? See what he gave for your Soul; he spilt his Blood *once* for you, and would do it again a thousand times for your Salvation; and will you still continue Slaves to Sin and the Devil? Sons of my Blood (he says to you) Children of my Love, for your Soul's Good was I nail'd to the Cross, and my Wounds, yet fresh, are crying aloud to you, to forsake your evil ways, and to follow me. And what Answer do you return, Christians, to these Complaints of your Loving Redeemer? Do you say, you *will not*? O never, never let it be so; but rather with a true sense of your Sins, and a hearty sorrow for having liv'd so long in Blindness, fall down at his Feet, and say from the bottom of your Heart; My Lord Jesus Christ, my God, my Father, my Redeemer, in whom I believe, in whom I put my Trust, and whom I love more than my own Life, more than my Soul, and above all things whatsoever: it repents me, Dear Lord, it repents me from my heart, that I have offended against thee. O infinite Goodness! O my Jesus! O, that I had never broken thy Commandments! O, that I had died a thousand Deaths, rather than have sinn'd against thy Divine Majesty! I am sorry for thy sake alone, for being who thou art, so infinitely holy, so good, so amiable; I am sorry, Dear Father, that I have injur'd thee with my Offences. And here I make a firm purpose, by the assistance of thy Grace, never more to sin: I offer here a thousand Lives, rather than return to my Iniquity; and resolve to avoid all Occasions and Dangers of committing any Crime against thee: I here intend to make a sincere Confession of all my Wickedness, and to comply with all the Obligations that shall be laid on me; and I trust, that through the Merits and Pardon of my loving Redeemer, I shall obtain pardon of all my Offences. I have sinned, Lord I have sinned; but thou, my God, have Mercy on me; Mercy, Blessed Saviour; Mercy, my Jesus. I love thee above all things, O my Jesus: Let thy Love, let thy Faith live and encrease; and replenish us with thy Grace, the Pledge of eternal Glory, *ad quam nos perducatur Sancta & individua Trinitas, Pater & Filius, & Spiritus Sanctus*, to which, God of his infinite Mercy bring us. Amen.